

MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 26, 2026
CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY
JON GRANT COMMUNITY CENTER
29260 GRAND RIVER AVE, FARMINGTON HILLS, MI 48336

CALLED TO ORDER BY: MARY NEWLIN AT 9:05 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: RICH, SMITH, NEWLIN, ALKHAFAJI, MANN

MEMBERS ABSENT: PRICE, PATROS

OTHERS PRESENT: Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director; John Trafelet, Mark, Saksewski, City Engineer; Richard Houdek and Allie Pearson from Grissim Metz Andriese; Steve Stramsak, Lead Traffic Engineer from Spalding DeDecker

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Smith, supported by Alkhafaji, to approve the agenda as submitted.
Unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Alkhafaji, supported by Smith, to approve the October 2, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted.
Unanimously approved.

BUSINESS

Mrs. Brockway reintroduced the members of the Grissim Metz Andriese (GMA) team, consultants for the Grand River Corridor streetscape and landscape plan.

Rich Houdek, President of GMA, opened the discussion of the first round of conceptual plans created for the Grand River Corridor. The first initial location in the concept plan included the area on Grand River Avenue between 8 Mile Road and Botsford Drive. There were two conceptual shared that displayed sweeping grasses within the center of the median, new native flowers, and a modern Farmington Hills welcome sign. The design also included landscaped bus shelters and a striped crosswalk across Grand River Avenue. Green and black colors were added throughout the renderings to pay homage to the city branding. These colors were examples of painted concrete within the Michigan left-turn-around locations. Additional tree plantings near the sidewalk within the right-of-way areas were also proposed.

Members of the board expressed their interest in the new designs but articulated that they wanted more ideas and more “wow” areas where people can interact. Rich and Mann expressed their interest in a “bolder” design that could draw more attention and interest to the Grand River Corridor.

Smith discussed with GMA his concern about visible areas while driving, specifically with relation to trees. GMA replied that any trees proposed would have an ample setback from a driver’s field of vision. The proposed plantings would also not grow widely.

Member Alkhafaji shared his desire for a list of the suggested plantings to understand more about what type of plants are proposed. He would also like to know what type of plantings can withstand the urban conditions along the corridor. Mrs. Mann also requested an estimated cost for the suggested plantings and interactive areas along the sidewalk.

Chairwoman Newlin mentioned her desire for a crosswalk that pays special attention to ADA compliance. She and other board members also began to discuss the need for an additional pedestrian crossing and a visual for that. GMA and Mr. Saksewski shared that any additional pedestrian crossings would have to be reviewed and approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). As Grand River Avenue is a state road, many approvals and discussions are expected to be had with MDOT.

Mrs. Brockway recorded the board's last comments related to a second round of concept plans needed by GMA. These include alternate designs, a list of plantings (preferably low maintenance), estimated cost for improvement areas, comparable locations, and more attractive elements to draw people to the corridor.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 A.M.
Unanimously approved.

Minutes drafted by: Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director